

**Human Rights Commission
August 3, 2010 Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mary Bixby, Scott Dean, Jessica Macy, Thomas O'Toole, Mark Thomas, Marissa Todd

Members Excused: Negar Rezvani

Staff Present: Steve Hollis, Marie Glaze, Fred Boeckmann

Others Present: George Frissell & Kellen Landry

- I. **Call to Order/Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Thomas. George Frissell, a teacher at Hickman High School and Kellen Landry, a student at Hickman were introduced and welcomed to the meeting.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Bixby moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by O'Toole and passed unanimously.
- III. **Approval of July 6, 2010 meeting minutes:** Todd made a motion to approve the July 6, 2010 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Dean and passed unanimously.

IV. Old Business:

Thomas inquired of Hollis if there was anything still pending with regard to the revised Human Rights Enhancement Policy. Hollis stated everything had been adopted and the city manager had approved the contract with Services for Independent Living. Hollis spoke about George Frissell's intent to apply for funding last fall and the problem he encountered with the CPS's new grant policy. He has since gotten approval to apply.

V. New Business:

Consideration of HREP proposal from Hickman High School Amnesty International:

George Frissell spoke about how he met Champe Lhumpo, a native of Tibet and a member of Dali Lama's Monastery, and how Amnesty International at Hickman became involved in inviting him to Columbia on a regular basis. Champe currently lives in Kansas City and teaches at the University of Kansas (KU). Frissell talked about how initially Champe's visits were funded by the Conrad Stawski fund but that has been depleted. He also talked about the number of students who get an opportunity to hear Champe. During the day he speaks to several hundred students in their classrooms and in the evening he speaks at the Amnesty International Meeting to approximately 200 students from the high schools and colleges. Landry spoke about how Champe Lhumpo has changed his outlook on life particularly with regard to everyday complaints about relatively trivial issues.

Todd wondered if perhaps the number of people benefiting from the program was too low. Thomas stated he felt the program reached a large number of young people. After a brief discussion a motion was made by Macy and seconded by Bixby and the commission unanimously approved funding for Hickman High School's Amnesty International proposal in the amount of \$500.00.

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VI. Staff Reports:

a. Manager of Human Services: Hollis expressed concern about the City budget. He said that he hasn't heard anything about Human Rights specifically, but everything is on the table. Boeckmann mentioned that department heads were told they should come prepared during budget process as they will be questioned. Hollis stated that the fiscal year 2011 budget will be tight and that 2012 will be even tighter. Thomas asked Hollis to discuss an e-mail sent to the commission regarding the visioning process meeting on Tuesday, August 10th. Hollis stated that since the Human Rights Commission was singled out in the document, perhaps members of the commission should plan to attend the meeting. Thomas asked if the commission's role would be impacted by Governor Nixon's executive order regarding sexual orientation. Boeckmann and Hollis explained that the order deals with state employees. Hollis explained that if it ever became a State Statute the City of Columbia would refer those complaints to the state.

b. Law Department: No report.

c. Human Rights Specialist: Glaze submitted the following written report:
Staff attended the David Harris event on Wednesday, July 21st. There were roughly 75 – 100 people in attendance. After so many false starts it is nice to report that it was a very good event and well worth all the angst. A few days before the event, staff was informed that the scheduled venue would not be available. We were able to use the ARC as an alternative venue. Following a dynamic power point presentation by Professor Harris there was a panel discussion moderated by NAACP President Mary Ratliff that included Police Chief Ken Burton, Noor-Azizan Gardner, Dr. Rashed Nizam and Dan Viets. The audience seemed to really enjoy Professor Harris' presentation and the panel discussion. There were a number of Chief Burton's command staff in attendance and staff managed to visit with one of the officers to get feedback on the presentation and was told that it was one of the most thorough presentations the officer had ever seen. In an effort to determine if there are officers on staff with "unconscious biases" Chief Burton plans to have the Attorney General's report analyzed to determine if there are officers making what might be excessive stops of minorities.

July 26th marked the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In signing the act then President Bush described the tearing down of a "Shameful Wall of Exclusion." The disabled population has come a long way in the past 20 years, but there remains a lot of work to do. Staff attended and exhibited at the Open House at New Horizons a not-for-profit community mental health program providing services in Boone and Cole County. There were also exhibits at Woodhaven and Services for Independent Living. All the agencies are within walking distance of each other.

Enclosed with this report is a fairly comprehensive Tribune article about ADA in Columbia, featuring our friend Aimee Wehmeier.

Glaze reported that she and Commissioner Macy also attended one of the brown bag luncheons funded by the Human Rights Commission. The panel discussed ADA: Then and Now. The panel consisted of Homer Page, Lee Henson and Gretchen Maune.

Glaze reported that she will be meeting with Services for Independent Living, Aimee Wehmeier and Great Plains ADA Center, Troy Balthazor on Monday, August 9th regarding accessibility improvements.

Staff reported the Columbia Values Diversity celebration will be on Thursday, January 13, 2011. The committee has had their first planning meeting and selected "Unity in Diversity" for the theme.

Thomas asked that the David Harris presentation be e-mailed to the commission and posted to the web site. Thomas stated that he understood Chief Burton would be looking at the Attorney General's report for profiling patterns. Glaze said that was true. Glaze said that all of Burton's command staff attended the Harris visit and that the chief appears to be committed to making positive changes.

VII. Commission Reports:

Citizens Police Review Board: Bixby reported that the agenda for the June 14th meeting was to allow time for the chief to finish talking about procedures and protocols. Bixby further stated the chief had done an internal review and determined there was no malfeasance connected with the SWAT raid in February. The Review Board was given a great deal of information about the shooting of the dogs. Chief Burton's conclusion was that the shooting of the dogs was justified because the officers could have been at risk given the type of dog (pitbull) involved. That was the only part of the Swat team raid that the chief felt should have been investigated as he had reviewed it and deemed the actions appropriate. Bixby stated there may be other parts of the swat raid they may need to be investigated. Bixby stated that the board will consider the full case. A board member raised the question as to the jurisdiction of submitting appeals. Boeckman stated that Councilperson Kespohl has requested the ordinance be revised to allow only the affected party, family members, witnesses, or any resident of Columbia. The Board will meet tomorrow night.

VIII. Public Comment: No Public Comment

IX. Commissioner Comments: No Commissioner Comment.

X. Closed Session to Discuss Pending Cases Pursuant to Section 610.021 (1)RSMo.: O'Toole made a motion to move to closed session to discuss pending cases pursuant to Section 610.021 (1) RSMo. The motion was seconded by Macy and a roll call vote was taken. O'Toole called the roll with the following vote: Dean – Aye, Macy – Aye, Bixby – Aye, O'Toole – Aye, Todd – Aye and Thomas – Aye.

XI. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Hollis,

Manager of Human Services